NEW TESTAMENT · GENERAL EPISTLES · BOOK 64 OF 66

3 John

No greater joy (v. 4)

14	c. A.D. 85–95	3	“Walk in Truth”
Verses (KJV), 1 Chapter	Written	Men Named	(v. 4)

BACKGROUND

A Letter to a Friend

NAME

3 John

The third letter linked with John; by number of words the shortest book in the Bible.

AUTHOR

“The Elder”

As in 2 John: the apostle John.

DATE

c. A.D. 85–95

About the same time as 1 and 2 John, from Ephesus.

READER

Gaius

“The wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth” (v. 1).

THE PEOPLE

Three Men in the Letter

vv. 1–8

Gaius

Walks in truth; welcomes travelling brethren and strangers.

vv. 9–10

Diotrephes

Loves the preeminence; refuses the brethren and casts out those who receive them.

v. 12

Demetrius

Of good report of all men, and of the truth itself.

COMPANION LETTERS

2 John and 3 John

2 John

- To the elect lady
- Do not receive deceivers (v. 10)
- Guard the truth

3 John

- To Gaius
- Receive true workers (v. 8)
- Support the truth

STRUCTURE

The Book in Four Parts



Each bar shows that part’s share of the 14 verses.

I vv. 1–4 · 4 verses

Greeting and Prayer

Walking in the truth.

II vv. 5–8 · 4 verses

Gaius Commended for His Hospitality

Fellowhelpers to the truth.

III vv. 9–12 · 4 verses

Diotrephes and Demetrius

A bad example and a good one.

IV vv. 13–14 · 2 verses

Closing

Peace and greetings.

The King James Version has 14 verses; some newer translations divide verse 14 and number 15.

Greeting and Prayer

VERSES 1–4

Greeting and Prayer

> *“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”*
>
> 3 John 2 (KJV)

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth” (v. 4).

Hospitality, Diotrephes and Demetrius

VERSES 5–8

Faithful Hospitality

1 v. 5

Faithful

To brethren and strangers

2 v. 6

Send Them On

"After a godly sort"

3 v. 7

For His Name

Taking nothing of the Gentiles

4 v. 8

Fellowhelpers

To the truth

VERSES 9–12

A Bad Example and a Good One

Diotrephes (vv. 9–10)

- "Loveth to have the preeminence"
- Prating with malicious words
- Casts the brethren out of the church

Demetrius (v. 12)

- "Good report of all men"
- And of the truth itself
- "Our record is true"

> *"Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God."*
>
> 3 John 11 (KJV)

Face to Face

VERSES 13–14

Face to Face

"I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face. Peace be to thee" (v. 14).

"Our friends salute thee. Greet the friends by name" (v. 14).

BIG IDEAS

Key Themes

Truth
Walking in it.
vv. 3–4

Hospitality
Receive such.
vv. 5–8

Fellowhelpers
Partners in the work.
v. 8

Humility
Not the preeminence.
vv. 9–10

Good Examples
Follow the good.
vv. 11–12

Fellowship
Face to face.
vv. 13–14

KEY VERSE

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."

3 John 4 (KJV)